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Trip Report

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1. Introduction

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[redacted] in the company of [redacted] visited Detachments B and C for the purpose of providing administrative coordination and technical liaison and to review the operation of the detachments. In addition [redacted] visited [redacted]

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2. Personnel2.1 Security

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At C Detachment the security record of the section was discussed with [redacted]. The Hycon group has not had a single security violation for over a year which is evidence of application of sound security procedures. [redacted] expressed appreciation for the high degree of cooperation given him by the group. The two new field men deployed this season have learned good security practices.

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At B Detachment the security record of the section was discussed with [redacted] reported that [redacted] and the whole group were cooperating with him wholeheartedly and that the basic attitude towards security were sounder than had been the case in the past. The section has not had a security violation so far this year.

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Discussions were held with all personnel regarding their willingness to continue for another year in the field with the exception of [redacted]

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[redacted] who were unavailable. As a matter of policy a rotation of personnel between detachments at intervals varying from one to two years was discussed and each individual was requested to consider this condition in making their decision. Every man spoken to indicated that he would remain in the program unless some unforeseen personal matter should arise to preclude his continuance. [redacted] had expressed to their supervisor a desire to continue. Although I had no opportunity to speak to [redacted] it is my opinion that he will wish to return to his wife and family at the expiration of this year's contract.

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I therefore plan to train a replacement for [redacted] and to phase in one man to provide back up for the field in order to protect us against unforeseen circumstances which might lead to loss of personnel.

2.3 Detachment Manning

In the discussion of the detachment manning requirements I have considered the special equipment group as a whole, i.e., including Tracker people with the special equipment group.

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At C Detachment the special equipment group is adequately manned to carry out all operations including staging in an efficient manner. The [] men are continuously employed and direct their full time to project operations. The Tracker group are continuously employed only during the time when staging operations are in process.

At B Detachment there are definitely man power problems. As of March 31st the accrued R & R time was as follows:

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11.8 days
26.2 days
22.6 days
27.4 days
29.8 days
33.6 days
39.4 days
17.6 days
23.8 days
31.8 days

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[] would have reached 60 days without leave and the entitlement to a day for a day. However, he took one day in [] to break up his time. At the time of my visit [] would reach the 60 day point on May 9th if unable to take some leave before that date. It should be pointed out that [] has also taken a day's leave locally when he has reached the 60 day point without having had leave in order to avoid accumulating a day leave for each duty day. This kind of devotion to duty is not called for by contract or oral agreement and should be brought to the attention of the proper headquarters personnel. I have commended them for their dedication to the project at their own personal expense though I had to point out that such actions were their own personal decisions and that should they choose to abide by the strict letter of their contracts there could be no disapproval on my part.

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On April 25th there were [] men on leave, one man sick, leaving an effective strength of [] people. Checking the leave schedule I found that the strength of the detachment for the next three weeks was as follows:

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May 1
May 8
May 15

[] men on leave
[] men on leave
[] men on leave

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[] on duty
[] on duty
[] on duty

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During the overlap of the shuttle, i. e., between Sunday and Wednesday there were as many as [] men absent leaving only [] on duty. When the uncertainty of the shuttle service is taken into account there is often a risk of being undermanned for an operation.

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This situation did arise on April 27th. However, myself and [] were able to fill the manpower gap. We were very appreciative of [] willing help when for a few days he became, in his own words, "the highest paid manual laborer in the project".

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If the two groups are to be kept separate then [] additional men are needed to maintain the level of activity in evidence at the time of the visit. The [] man in the PE group would largely be employed in conducting the purging operation and would probably be busy about half time based on the observations I made during this visit.

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The Hycon group needs a minimum of [] to conduct operations efficiently and to maintain R & R schedules in accordance with the terms of the field service contract. Adding [] to the Hycon group would be least expensive because unless [] is added each of the [] men now assigned to B Detachment will have to be paid off for 20 days of accrued R & R time at the end of the contract. Further I cannot offer our men a contract in good faith when I know that its terms cannot be met.

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Should the two groups be combined and completely under the control of one supervisor, [] men could handle the work and meet R & R schedules.

3. Technical

3.1 Training Level Capability

All duties have been rotated among the special equipment section during the last year. Consequently all personnel with the exception of the new men are completely familiar with every detail of the operation.

3.2 Shop Facilities

Shop facilities are well maintained and good housekeeping practices are evident.

3.3 Photo Equipment

Configurations #10 and #8 were inspected and were in good condition. the mirror on #8 has been changed and is in excellent condition. The mirror on #10 has not been changed. The surface is in excellent condition - scratches are few and are minor. The take shows no signs of degradation. There is a play of colors on the mirror surface when viewed by white light indicating a thin film is present on the surface. This condition should not degrade the results in any way in my opinion.

The condition of #5 configuration was fully reported in a TWX to Hq. The mirror in #5 had been replaced.

At B Detachment Configurations #6, #9, #12 and #2 were inspected. No. 6, 9 and 12 were in good condition. Configuration #2 is in poor condition. Two corners of the BBQ hood are broken, there is a break in the left hand corner looking forward where the BBQ hood fits, there are a number of popped rivets in the structure, and there are light leaks around the bottom of the bird cage. The mirror has a small chip near the edge and though this condition is not serious the edges of the chip surface should be ground off to relieve residual stressed which might eventually cause the mirror to deteriorate. The coating on the lens shows numerous fine scratches. It is recommended that this configuration be returned to M & O for complete overhaul. The overhaul will involve M & O labor only and therefore it is not anticipated that additional funds will be required.

The A-2 configurations are in good condition. However, in view of their limited operational use over the past year it is suggested that one or two from each detachment could be returned and stored after being inspected in M & O.

The A-1 Configuration at C Detachment is in good condition. The Commanding Officer requested that the cycling rate of the configuration be increased if possible to give maximum coverage off typhoons.

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4. Visit

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was visited in company with

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Three EH-6's have been installed and the problems relating to their use have been successfully worked out. The main problem is that of obtaining practice material to ensure that the machines and operating personnel are kept at peak efficiency. personnel suggested that a method should be found for marking the material between frames so that information would not be lost through random cuts. They also suggested that large magazines be supplied for the EH-6 so that a full roll of material could be processed. While no comment could be made on this suggestion the idea is

certainly feasible. Should headquarters wish to supply such magazines they could be fabricated at the M & O facility if there would be security difficulties in having them made by the EH-6 manufacturer.

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[] expressed his appreciation for the cooperation he has received from []

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An organizational change at [] has given the 497th direct responsibility for processing which should result in improvement. The problems that [] are having with the A-9 as well as with the EH-6's are of such magnitude that it is unlikely that they are capable of solving them without assistance. It is suggested that one or two of the [] from [] be sent TDY to [] to gain first hand experience on the proper maintenance and operation of this equipment.

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[] requested a copy of the fault book. One will be sent to headquarters for forwarding to them through channels.

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